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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 ADDIS ABABA 001662

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [AU](#)

SUBJECT: AFRICAN UNION SUMMIT WRAP-UP: QADHAFI PULLS IT  
OFF, BARELY

REF: A. ADDIS ABABA 1607

[1](#)B. STATE 67887

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Classified By: AMBASSADOR DONALD YAMAMOTO, REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: The African Union (AU) Summit in Sirte, Libya, resulted in a strong call by member states for the United Nations Security Council to impose sanctions on Eritrea for its support of al-Shabaab forces who are threatening the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of President Sheikh Sharif Ahmed. The vast majority of African leaders also vowed not to cooperate in handing over Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir to the International Criminal Court (ICC). As for the future of the AU itself, heads of state held vigorous and marathon debates that concluded with a decision to transform the AU Commission into the AU Authority. The transformation, which Libyan Leader and AU Assembly Chairperson Moammar Qadhafi has pushed as part of his vision for a "United States of Africa," may not actually materialize for years. Qadhafi pulled out all the stops -- sometimes to the point of hilarity -- to make delegates feel welcome. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (U) The 13th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the AU took place July 1-July 3 in Sirte, Libya. Twenty-four of the 53 AU heads of state attended the Summit -- three more than attended the February Summit in Addis Ababa. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson led the USG delegation. He was accompanied by Special Envoy for Sudan Scott Gration. This was A/S Carson's first AU Summit since taking up his position in May.

[1](#)3. (U) SOMALIA: At the Summit, the Assembly of Heads of States congratulated Somali President Sheikh Sharif Ahmed on the progress he has made in the country's political process and condemned the recent surge in attacks on the TFG and the civilian population. Furthermore, the Assembly made clear its full support for the TFG as the legitimate authority in Somalia. Heads of state asked that member states, as well as the international community, provide necessary support to the TFG to help the government deal with the current security situation, making special mention of their appreciation of

the Intergovernmental Authority on Development's (IGAD) support to the TFG. The Assembly also reiterated that member states that have promised troops to AMISOM should make good on these promises, and it emphasized the need for greater contributions of military and police personnel to the mission.

¶4. (U) In response to recent destabilizing activities (such as piracy, illegal fishing, and toxic waste dumping) off the coast of Somalia, the Assembly called for a comprehensive strategy to address these concerns. Finally, the heads of state asked that the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) "take immediate measures, including the imposition of a no-fly zone and blockade of sea ports" to prevent further entry of weapons into Somalia, and to sanction "foreign actors ... especially Eritrea" that are supporting armed anti-TFG groups in the country.

¶5. (U) SUDAN AND THE ICC: The Assembly issued a decision regarding the Rome Statute of the ICC and how to deal with the ICC's indictment of Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir. The Assembly rallied around Bashir and determined not to cooperate in his arrest and surrender (though such cooperation is mandated by Article 98 of the Rome Statute of the ICC). They also attributed their final stance to the fact that the UNSC has neither "heard nor acted upon" an AU request to defer proceedings of the Bashir indictment. (Note: According to AU sources privy to the closed-door deliberations, Chad and Botswana argued that member states should respect the ICC's warrant for Bashir. End note.) Members of the AU Commission said that they would work with other AU justice bodies to examine the "implications of the Court being empowered to try serious crimes of international concern." Heads of state asked the AU Commission to convene a meeting of African parties to the Rome Statute where they

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would review the procedures and statutes of the ICC. Moreover, heads of state vowed to "take any further decisions ... deemed necessary ... (to) safeguard the dignity, sovereignty and integrity of the continent."

¶6. (U) ERITREA-DJIBOUTI CONFLICT: Despite demands that Eritrea cooperate in scaling down the Djibouti-Eritrea border conflict during the last two Ordinary Sessions of the AU Assembly (held in Addis in February 2009 and Sharm el-Sheikh in July 2008), Eritrea has repeatedly refused to cooperate. At this Summit, heads of state expressed "grave concern" at Eritrea's lack of progress and urged the country to comply with their previous demands.

¶7. (U) OTHER PEACE AND SECURITY ISSUES: The Assembly addressed several other African peace and security issues at the Summit, sometimes issuing its congratulations and sometimes urging recommitment to national cooperation or a timely cessation of violence. The Assembly welcomed progress made in political agreements in Burundi, the DRC, the Darfur region of Sudan, Mauritania, and Cote d'Ivoire. Furthermore, the Assembly condemned violence and encouraged greater cooperation in Madagascar, Guinea-Bissau, Darfur, and between Sudan and Chad.

¶8. (C) CREATION OF AN AU AUTHORITY: Heads of state also agreed to replace the AU Commission with the AU Authority. According to Qadhafi, this change will allow Africa to speak "with one voice" on issues of international significance. However, the agreement needs to be ratified by African parliaments, a process that could take months, or even years.

Heads of state deferred a decision on the establishment of an African Defense Council under the AU Authority, with many member states considering Qadhafi's vision of the Council to be an infringement of their sovereignty. (Note: Ordinarily, the AU Chairperson presides over sessions of the AU Assembly of Heads of State, but Qadhafi frequently inserted himself in sessions at the Permanent Representatives Committee and Executive Council, or ministerial, levels. In doing so, he alienated delegates. End note.)

¶9. (C) UNCONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES OF GOVERNMENT: Both Guinea and Madagascar remain suspended from the AU for failing to restore constitutional order following coups d'etat. Mauritania, which had also been suspended by the AU following

the August 2008 coup there, was formally reinstated by the Peace and Security Council at the ministerial level on June 29 as a result of an agreement to hold elections, but the country did not have time to send a delegation to the Summit.

(Note: As reported in ref A, in his July 6 meeting with AU Commission Deputy Chairperson Mwench, A/S Carson questioned why the AU reinstated Mauritania before the July 18 elections, saying it might set a bad precedent for other nations whose processes for the return to democracy were incomplete. Mwench replied that the AU decided that its prerequisite of returning Mauritania to constitutional order had been met, and that it would be inappropriate to impose new conditions on the junta. End note.) Technically, Mauritania could have sent a delegation to the Summit following the Peace and Security Council decision, but time did not permit it since the reinstatement took place after the beginning of the Executive Council's opening.

¶10. (U) The Assembly demonstrated a desire to consider new ways of dealing with unconstitutional changes of government on the continent; in the following months, AU Commission Chairperson Jean Ping will begin to consult with leaders of relevant AU organs, such as the RECs, the Pan African Parliament, and the Economic, Social, and Cultural Council, about how to move forward with this objective.

¶11. (U) AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY -- THE SUMMIT'S THEME GETS SHORT SHRIFT: In line with the Summit theme, "Investing in Agriculture to Ensure Food Security," the AU issued two declarations on land issues and investment in African agriculture. These declarations include measures to be undertaken by member states, the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the African Development Bank, UN Economic Commission for Africa, New Partnership for Africa's Development, and international partners. In the

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declarations, member states specifically asked that international development partners harmonize investments in African agriculture and make available agriculture sector financing initiatives. Heads of state also agreed to ratify the Protocol and Statutes of the African Investment Bank. As with past AU Summits, the stated theme gets little attention as delegates focus on conflicts across the continent.

¶12. (SBU) SUMMIT ATMOSPHERICS: The AU Summit was almost overshadowed by the announced visit of Iranian President Ahmedinejad, who Qadhafi invited without consultation with the AU Commission or member states. US and European delegates were ready to sit out any meetings that Ahmedinejad would address to protest his usual propagation of untruths and issuance of threats (ref B). However, as the opening ceremonies of the Assembly were about to get underway on July 1, delegates heard that Ahmedinejad had decided to stay in Tehran, where street protests had erupted.

¶13. (SBU) There were also rumors that Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak would attend this Summit, but he, too, was a no-show. Mubarak has not attended a Summit of the AU (or Summits of its predecessor entity, the Organization of African Unity) since June 1995, when an attempt was made on his life in Addis Ababa. Reportedly, Uganda's President Museveni and Rwanda's President Kagame also backed out of the Summit at the last minute.

¶14. (SBU) The opening ceremony featured addresses by several guests of honor:

-- Brazilian President Lula invited the African agriculture ministers to a Summit on agriculture in Brazil in September, and he sought African support for Rio's candidacy for the 2016 Olympic Games. Lula highlighted cultural similarities between Africa and Brazil, and said that African nations should increase coordination with Brazil in order to face common global challenges. Qadhafi responded to the Brazilian leader by advising him that it was inappropriate to hold the agriculture conference in September as many Africans would be at home observing Ramadan. He also appeared to feign ignorance about "these Olympic Games," saying he was only aware of Libya's Jamahiriya Games.

-- Qatari Emir Hamad al-Thani thanked the African leaders for their "support of just Arab issues," and said that a "halt to wars" was necessary to bring about security and stability, which are vital for African development. The Qatari leader departed from Sirte shortly thereafter.

-- Arab League Secretary-General Amr Moussa said that the agricultural theme of the Summit reflected the needs of the African people. He also said that Africa and the Arab world have to work together to combat the recurrence of conflicts.

-- UN Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro emphasized the centrality of agriculture to development and the importance of empowering female rural farmers.

-- One of Africa's traditional kings invited to the Summit showered praises on the Libyan Leader, and Qadhafi returned the favor by telling conference attendees that traditional monarchs are the "true voice" of Africa that should be heeded. Qadhafi, who calls himself the "King of Kings," disparaged outside influences on the continent. More than 100 traditional rulers in full costume occupied a section of the conference hall.

¶15. (SBU) In the run-up to the Summit, the AU Commission, member states, and invited partners were concerned that the Libyans were unprepared to host the event. There were rumors that delegates would have to sleep in tents, on straw mats on the beach, or crowded into dormitories, and have no cellular phone access. Promised logistical arrangements included the provision of two luxury cruise ships to accommodate several hundred guests. In the end, however, one car ferry that ordinarily provides service between Athens and the Greek

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islands moored in Sirte, but the few dozen diplomats who were able to secure berths found some on-board services lacking. Other delegates were housed in brand-new apartment buildings and assorted villas. Some 600 Turks were flown to Libya to provide food services.

¶16. (SBU) Despite a fitful start to the Summit, the Libyan Leader pulled out all the stops by the time heads of state arrived. He provided free lodging, meals, SIM cards, and protocol vehicles to many delegations. The little coastal city of Sirte was bedecked with portraits of Qadhafi, Pan-African slogans in English, French, and Arabic proclaiming, "Africa is Hope," "Death to Africa's Enemies," and "One African Currency," as well as brightly floodlit buildings, flags and banners, and ornaments that suggested a Christmas theme. In the Ouagadougou Conference Complex built by Qadhafi to host continental summits, Muzak Christmas songs and Mendelssohn's wedding march played incessantly and loudly. YAMAMOTO